

## **Common Principles Underlying Future Waste & Materials Management Policies**

*These principles are meant to be living language, and not just fine print. They are to be used to spark honest, constructive dialogue among the wide range of interested parties.*

*Language incorporated in these principles reflects an interest in encouraging not only enforcement but also voluntary actions as potential ways for affected parties to address important environmental concerns. Our work with stakeholder groups in developing these principles indicates that resource use and conservation are issues of stewardship for so many – not just the Waste & Materials Management Program of DNR.*

*We expect that applying these principles to future work will promote more effective engagement among all parties, bringing about the greatest amount of environmental gain and protection.<sup>1</sup>*

**Purpose:** To provide a shared foundation between the Waste & Materials Management Program and its stakeholders to work together to achieve effective waste and materials management.

### **Clear and measurable goals**

- Policies should establish clear goals that can be evaluated.

### **Resource use and conservation**

- Policies should address the inter-relatedness of air, land and water.
- Policies should recognize the environment does not stop at political boundaries.
- Policies should conserve resources for the benefit of future generations.
- Policies should consider both the long-term and short-term needs and demands of the natural environment and human society.
- Policies should optimize the cycle of materials use, recovery and reuse.
- Policies should create conditions for directing public and private resources efficiently in order to achieve continuing environmental improvement and protection.

### **Informed environmental choices**

- Policies should ensure that knowledge about environmental consequences is integrated into the choices and decisions that people make.
- Policies should be based on the best available scientific and economic information.

### **Accountability**

- Policies should encourage acceptance of personal responsibility for consequences of one's actions.
- Policies should include a continuous educational process to help individuals and organizations develop environmental accountability.

### **Public involvement**

- Policies should be the result of a public dialogue on desired environmental outcomes.
- Policies should result from an inclusive process that involves the interested public.

### **Mechanisms**

- Policies should be flexible, encourage transparency, reward innovation and contain both incentives and disincentives.

---

<sup>1</sup> These principles were the result of applying EMS to the policy development process. An initial draft was crafted to reflect the common ground developed between a group representing both the Waste & Materials Management Program and a broad range of external interests. That draft was subsequently reviewed for comment in six meetings across the state, after which another diverse group discussed those comments and finalized this document.